

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-31 (Canceled)

Claim 32 (Currently Amended) A method for the introduction of inhibitory RNA in the cytoplasm of ~~plant cells~~ a plant cell, said inhibitory RNA reducing or abolishing the expression of a gene in the plant cell, said method comprising:

- a) introducing into said plant cell, a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco mosaic virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, ~~or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA~~, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus, ~~and wherein part or all of the coat protein encoding gene of satellite tobacco mosaic virus has been deleted~~ wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises a sense RNA or an antisense RNA, said sense or antisense RNA comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least 50 nucleotides having 95% to 100% sequence identity to the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof; and
- b) introducing a corresponding helper virus into said plant cell.

Claims 33-37 (Canceled)

Claim 38 (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32 or 61, wherein said helper virus is tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended) A method for the introduction of inhibitory RNA into the cytoplasm of ~~plant cells~~ a plant cell, said inhibitory RNA reducing or abolishing the expression of a gene in the plant cell, said method comprising:

- a) introducing into said plant cell a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco necrosis virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, ~~or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA~~, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises a sense RNA or an antisense RNA, said sense or antisense RNA comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least 50 nucleotides having 95% to 100% sequence identity to the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof; and
- b) introducing a corresponding helper virus into said plant cell, wherein said helper virus is derived from tobacco necrosis virus and comprises a coat protein gene of tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 40 (Currently Amended) The method of claim 39 or 61, wherein said satellite RNA virus is satellite tobacco necrosis vector strain 1 or 2 and said helper virus is derived from TNV-A.

Claim 41 (Currently Amended) The method of claim 39 or 61, wherein said satellite RNA virus is STNV-C and said helper virus is derived from TNV-D.

Claim 42 (Currently Amended) The method of any one of claims 32, 38, 39 to 41, 54, 58, and 61 ~~and 53 to 60~~, wherein said plant is selected from *Nicotinia* spp, *Oryza sativa*, *Zea Mays*, *Brassica* spp., *Gossypium* spp., *Triticum* spp., *Arabidopsis* spp. or *Petunia* spp.

Claim 43 (Currently Amended) A kit for the introduction of inhibitory RNA in the cytoplasm of a plant cell, said inhibitory RNA reducing or abolishing the expression of a gene in the plant cell, said kit comprising

- a) a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco mosaic virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, ~~or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA~~, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus, ~~and wherein part or all of the coat protein encoding gene of satellite tobacco mosaic virus has been deleted~~ wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises a sense RNA or an antisense RNA, said sense or antisense RNA comprising a

nucleotide sequence of at least 50 nucleotides having 95% to 100% sequence identity to the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof; and

- b) a corresponding helper virus.

Claims 44-48 (Canceled)

Claim 49 (Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43 or 62, wherein said corresponding helper virus is tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 50 (Currently Amended) A kit for the introduction of inhibitory RNA into the cytoplasm of a plant cell, said inhibitory RNA reducing or abolishing the expression of a gene in the plant cell, said kit comprising:

- a) a viral RNA vector derived from satellite tobacco necrosis virus, wherein said vector comprises said inhibitory RNA, ~~or a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields said inhibitory RNA~~, and an origin of assembly of tobacco mosaic virus wherein said inhibitory RNA comprises a sense RNA or an antisense RNA, said sense or antisense RNA comprising a nucleotide sequence of at least 50 nucleotides having 95% to 100% sequence identity to the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof; and
- b) a corresponding helper virus derived from tobacco necrosis virus, said virus comprising the coat protein gene of tobacco mosaic virus.

Claim 51 (Currently Amended) The kit of claim 50 or 62, wherein said satellite RNA virus is satellite tobacco necrosis vector strain 1 or 2 and said corresponding helper virus is derived from TNV-A.

Claim 52 (Currently Amended) The kit of claim 50 or 62, wherein said satellite RNA virus is STNV-C and said corresponding helper virus is derived from TNV-D.

Claim 53 (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 2 from the nucleotide at position 5443 to the nucleotide at position 5518.

Claim 54 (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 5 from the nucleotide at position 5430 to the nucleotide at position 5505.

Claim 55 (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 12.

Claim 56 (Withdrawn) The method of claim 32, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 4 from the nucleotide at position 1 to the nucleotide at position 197.

Claim 57 (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43 or 62, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 2 from the nucleotide at position 5443 to the nucleotide at position 5518.

Claim 58 (Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43 or 62, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 5 from the nucleotide at position 5430 to the nucleotide at position 5505.

Claim 59 (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43 or 62, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 12.

Claim 60 (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The kit of claim 43 or 62, wherein said viral RNA vector comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No 4 from the nucleotide at position 1 to the nucleotide at position 197.

Claim 61 (New) The method of claim 32 or 39, wherein said sense RNA or said antisense RNA comprises a nucleotide sequence of at least 100 nucleotides having at least 95%

to 100 % sequence identity of the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof.

Claim 62 (New) The kit of claim 43 or 50, wherein said sense RNA or said antisense RNA comprises a nucleotide sequence of at least 100 nucleotides having at least 95% to 100 % sequence identity of the nucleotide sequence of said gene in said plant cell or the complement thereof.